

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 L-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00

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IO-10 CIEP-01 OMB-01 /070 W
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R 260728Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3384

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SANA

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1652

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, SO, UR

SUBJECT: SOMALI MILITARY MANEUVERS

1. EGYPTIAN MIL ATTACHE LT. COL. ABDEL-HALIM INFORMED EMBOFF NOVEMBER 24 THAT SOMALI ARMY (SNA) BATTALION SUPPORTED BY MIG-17'S FROM SOMALI AIR FORCE AND TWO OSA-II BOATS FROM SOMALI NAVY CURRENTLY COMPLETING MILITARY MANEUVERS ALONG COAST IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF MOGADISCIO. COLONEL HALIM ALSO SAYS THAT SOVIET PILOTS ARE LEADING MIG-17 GROUP IN EXERCISES (FYI WE HAVE SEEN MIG-17'S HORNETING THROUGH SKIES AROUND MOGADISCIO LAST SEVERAL DAYS BUT NOTHING ELSE END FYI).

2. ACCORDING TO COLONEL HALIM, SOMALI MILITARY, NAVAL AND AIR UNITS ARE CARRYING OUT COMBINED LAND, AIR AND SEA EXERCISE TO SIMULATE OPERATION ALONG DJIBOUTI COASTLINE. HALIM'S INFO BASED ON SNA SOURCES.

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3. DESPITE MANEUVERS COLONEL HALIM DIMISSES ANY

POSSIBILITY THAT SOVIETS WOULD ENDORSE SOMALI MOVE AGAINST TFAI AT THIS TIME. HE CLAIMS THAT SIAD AND SOVIETS RECENTLY HAD DISAGREEMENT OVER TIMING OF ANY SOMALI MOVE AGAINST TFAI. ACCORDING HALIM, SOVIETS DISTURBED BY POSSIBILITY THAT SIAD AND SOVIET-TRAINED SNA WERE GETTING RESTLESS ABOUT TFAI AND THAT THEIR AMBITIONS MIGHT GET OUT OF HAND. RUSSIANS BLUNTLY TOLD SIAD THAT ANY SOMALI INITIATIVE AGAINST TERRITORY PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE COULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR SOMALIA. INSTEAD, SOVIETS ADVISED THAT OPPORTUNITY FOR SIAD TO REALIZE HIS TERRITORY AND ETHNIC CLAIMS IN TFAI WOULD COME AFTER INDEPENDENCE AND WOULD BEST BE LAUNCHED FROM WITHIN, MEANING PRESUMABLY FROM INTERNAL FIFTH COLUMN FORMED FROM ISSAS AND OTHER ETHNIC SOMALIS AGITATING FOR THEIR LIBERATION FROM ALI AREF'S NEO-COLONIALISTS. SIAD REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED THIS ADVICE, ALTHOUGH GRUDGINGLY; AND SOVIETS, TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR SUPPORT, ARRANGED JOINT MANEUVERS ALONG SOMALI COAST, AND EXERCISE WHICH LETS THE SNA SHOW ITS MUSCLE, NAVY ITS NEW BOATS, AND SOVIETS THEIR GOOD FAITH.

4. WHEN EMBOFF SUGGESTED THAT THIS WAS SOMEWHAT RISKY GAME FOR SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS TO PLAY AND THAT THEY MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONTROL TOMORROW OR NEXT YEAR ANY MILITARY APPETITES THEY WERE WHETTING TODAY, HALIM AGREED. BUT HE THOUGHT THAT SOVIET ADVISORS HAD NO RPT NO INTENTION OF PERMITTING SNA OR SIAD TO SLIP SOVIET LEASH -- TODAY OR NEXT YEAR -- AND THAT RUSSIANS WOULD IN TIME FIND YET ANOTHER REASON TO STALL IN TACITLY SPONSORING USE OF SOVIET ARMS BEYOND BORDERS OF PRESENT DAY SOMALIA.

5. ABOVE IS INTERESTING SCENARIO WHICH WE CANNOT VOUCH FOR IN MOST OF DETAILS. WE HAVE HEARD FROM FRENCH AMBASSADOR THAT SIAD TOLD LE MONDE JOURNALIST PHILLIPE DECREASENE ON NOV. 22 THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT ALI AREF GOVERNMENT IN TFAI (BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL), AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WHICH MARKS SOMETHING OF A DEPARTURE FROM THE RABID ANTI-AREF LINE TAKEN PUBLICLY BY THE SDR IN MORE RECENT WEEKS.
LOUGHRAN

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